

The **Gap** at the **Rec** Consultation Report

(Get active pathway)

Proposed installation of a Pathway and Pump Track

The aim of the consultation was to explore:

- * public opinion on the installation of a 1km Pathway around the Horam Recreation Ground;
- * public opinion on the installation of a Pump Track at the Horam Recreation Ground;
- * how respondents would use the proposed new facilities;
- * benefits and barriers of using the proposed new facilities;

Purpose

The Horam Village Hall & Recreation Ground Charity, which owns the Horam Recreation Ground, is keen to maximise use of the facilities to all residents. Over the years, many new facilities have been added, such as the play area, the skatepark, outdoor table tennis tables, and these can be used in the winter months. However, the largest amount of space, the grassed areas, are not accessible to all throughout the winter months. In addition, the recreation ground has been used increasingly regularly by local residents during the Covid 19 restrictions, for outdoor exercise and activity.

The Charity therefore, wants to install a pathway around the perimeter of the whole green area to enable everyone, including disabled people, older people with mobility issues, parents with buggies, grandparents and toddlers, to be able to access the whole space to increase levels of physical activity and mental wellbeing, and to enjoy nature/ surroundings all year round.

The addition of the pump track is in response to general feedback, and to the likely doubling of the population for Horam due to new housing allocations. The recreation ground is the only community outdoor space in Horam and it must be fit for purpose and meet the growing local challenges.

1 Introduction

1.1 The consultation ran from 1.9.2020-18.9.2020. This is a final report and will enable the Horam Village & Recreation Ground Charity to find out whether there is local support for the proposals and if so, to further discuss the proposed project with Horam Parish Council, and other potential funders.

2 Context

2.1 Horam is a village situated in the Weald of Sussex in south-east England. It was once part of a vast forest of 1700 square miles situated between the North Downs and the South Downs. Today, nothing is left of the ancient forest, except for a few sites which are now of scientific interest, and the Weald is now a land of green fields, arable farmland and small woods.

2.2 Horam Recreation Ground was bequeathed to the village of Horam by a local resident, Constance Scott in 1948 'with the object of improving the life for the said inhabitants of Horam'. Horam Village Hall & Recreation Ground Charity was set up to deliver that objective, and is managed by volunteer trustees made up of Horam residents. The ground is home to several sports clubs, and provides youth and children's play facilities.

2.3 Horam Parish Council's responsibilities include services such as traffic and road safety, litter control, pavements, grass verge maintenance and street lighting. The local council, has been a supportive partner to the Horam Village Hall & Recreation Ground Charity by funding the playground and skatepark for young people, using funds from S106 payments made to Wealden District Council by the developers of the Merrydown site. More recently, the main village hall car park has been resurfaced by the Parish Council, using CIL(Community Infrastructure Levy) funds, received from local building developers. The Horam Village Hall & Recreation Ground Charity also made a contribution towards the overall cost of this project by obtaining a grant from the National Lottery. The Horam Village Hall & Recreation Ground Charity plans to work very closely with the Parish Council on the results of the consultation, and the opportunities that they could deliver for the whole community.

2.4 Horam's residential population is approximately 2642, but this is set to double in the next few years, due to a new housing allocation increase for the area. The percentage of residents aged 0-14 is 15.8%, 55.1% are aged 45+, and of these nearly 25% are retired. In terms of ethnicity 98% identify as white, with the next highest group identifying as mixed at 1%. Those with a long-term health issues or disability make up 19.9% of the population, and 10.2% of the population of Horam say their day to day activities are limited a lot. In terms of the economy, 70.2% are economically active, with 1.9% unemployed.

2.5 The Horam Neighbourhood Plan, created by Horam Parish Council is currently being developed, and a public consultation on the plan has now closed. Feedback from that consultation has now been made public and two results, noted below, are relevant to The Gap at the Rec consultation:

- * what you liked best about the Parish(multiple choice question) : The countryside: 83%; The village atmosphere: 67%;
- * how important to you is the preservation of environment and wildlife in the Parish?: Green space: 92%;

3. **Who was consulted**

We consulted every local household in Horam, recreation ground users, organised sports groups based at the recreation ground, local organisations, schools, GP surgery, churches, Sustrans (a UK walking and cycling charity, which owns the Cuckoo Trail).

4 **Methodology**

The aim of the consultation was to ascertain public opinion about the proposed new facilities at the Horam Recreation Ground.

Due to Covid 19 and ongoing government advice on social distancing, we consulted people using paper surveys, emails, local newsletter, electronically by email and via a poll on Facebook solely asking if respondents were in favour of the pathway.

A total of 478 responses were received via the paper survey and Facebook poll.

Paper survey: 220 responded

Facebook poll: 258 responded (on a single question)

5 **About you - Summary of Paper Survey Findings**

Residence

Local resident: 156 (70.9%)

Not local: 44 (20.0%)

No reply: 20 (9.1%)

Gender

Male: 76 (34.5%)
Female: 126 (57.3%)
No reply: 18 (8.2%)

Age Group

U-18: 17 (8.1%)
18-24: 12 (5.7%)
25-34: 31 (14.9%)
35-44: 56 (26.9%)
45-54: 24 (11.5%)
55-64: 25 (12.0%)
65 & over: 43 (20.6%)

Ethnicity

White: 188 (97.9%)
Asian/Asian
British: 3 (1.6%)
Black/Black
British: 1 (0.5%)

Disability

Yes: 5 (2.6%)
No: 191 (97.4%)

6 Headline results

The consultation highlighted a passionate endorsement of the Horam Recreation Ground, and the facilities and services it provides for the benefit of the local residents. The level of praise for the ground, even from those who did not especially endorse the proposed two new facilities, was overwhelmingly high.

The overall consultation findings show very high support for the two new facilities. This is backed up by the many comments and suggestions listed. These are wide ranging, and linked to current relevant issues in Horam, such as the increase in housing and population, access to the ground, and the desire for more trees at the recreation ground.

* 212 (96.8%) of paper survey respondents, are in favour of installing a pathway around the recreation ground.

- * 249 (96.5%) people said on a Facebook poll that they were in favour of the Pathway around the recreation ground
- * 206 (94%) of paper survey respondents, are in favour of installing a pump track at the recreation ground.
- * Disabled respondents note that it is difficult to walk on grass, particularly in the winter.
- * There were many supportive suggestions for enhancing the new facilities, and the recreation ground overall.
- * The key concerns of respondents who were not in favour of the new facilities, were potential anti- social behaviour, noise encroaching on what is seen as a quiet and peaceful place, and safety worries about both cyclists and pedestrians using the pathway at the same time.

Summary of paper survey findings

Overall there were many positive comments in support of the new facilities;
 There were **9** negative comments, not in support of the new facilities;
 There were **3** supportive comments on the Horam Recreation Ground, and **23** positive suggestions on further improving the ground.

Q1 - How would you use the new facilities? Of those that replied:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Walking: | 81.3% (53 male, 109 female, 17 gender not listed) |
| Jogging/ running: | 35.49% (22 male, 49 female, 7 gender not listed) |
| Learning to ride a bike: | 35.0% (18 male, 51 female, 8 gender not listed) |
| Cycling: | 64.0% (49 male, 78 female, 14 gender not listed) |
| Roller blading/ scooting: | 46.8% (24 male, 72 female, 7 gender not listed) |
| Enjoying nature/ Surroundings: | 74.0% (43 male, 106 female, 14 gender not listed) |
| Other: | 0.9%. (2 male) (skateboarding) |

Q2 Do you feel there are benefits to you in using the new facilities?

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Physical health: | 91.8% (68 male, 118 female, 16 gender not listed) |
| Mental wellbeing: | 91.8% (66 male, 120 female, 16 gender not listed) |
| Community | |

cohesion: 70.9% (50 male, 91 female, 15 gender not listed)
New skills: 54.5% (39 male, 70 female, 11 gender not listed)
Other: 00.0%

Q3 Do you foresee any barriers to you in using the new facilities?

No: 91.4% (70 male, 114 female, 17 gender not listed)
Yes: 8.6% (6 male, 12 female, 1 gender not listed)

Comments

18 comments covered respondents barriers to using the new facilities:

2 comments on cars accessing the pathway
3 comments on speed of cycles on the pathway
4 comments on the ground getting too busy/crowded
2 comments on difficulty of accessing the recreation ground
3 comments on use of new facilities by disabled users
1 comment on facilities being dominated by young people
1 comment on social distancing rules regarding new facilities
2 comments on dogs at the new facilities

Q4 Are you in favour of the proposed new pathway?

Yes: 96.8% (72 male, 122 female, 18 gender not listed)
No: 2.3% (3 male, 2 female)
Don't know: 0.9% (1 male, 1 female)

Note: Separately to the paper survey a Facebook poll asked the question: 'are you in favour of the proposed pathway' with simple 'yes', 'no', 'unsure' options only. 249 people voted Yes, 6 people voted No, and 3 were unsure.

Comments

61 comments covered respondents' main reasons for supporting the proposed pathway:

24 comments on it being a great idea
3 comments on it helping to promote cycling
1 comment on it helping to promote running
11 comments on it enabling all year round use of the facility
5 comments on it increasing use by disabled people
6 comments on it being beneficial for children and young people
9 comments on it providing health benefits

1 comment on it enabling new skills
1 comment on it being a safe space

3 comments covered respondents main reasons for not supporting the proposed pathway:

3 comments on it not being safe for both cyclists and pedestrians using the same space

Q5 Are you in favour of the proposed new pump track?

* 94.0% (71 male, 118 female, 17 gender not listed) Yes
* 2.3% (0 male, 4 female, 1 gender not listed) No
* 3.7% (4 male, 4 female) Don't Know

Comments

60 comments covered respondents' main reason for supporting the proposed pump track

3 comments on it enabling new skills
1 comments on it being easy to maintain
6 comments on it providing health benefits
3 comments on it being local
1 comment on it's proposed location, and preference for it being near the skatepark
28 comments on it being a great idea
18 comments on it being beneficial for children and young people

8 comments covered respondents main reasons for not supporting the proposed pump track:

4 comments on concerns about anti social behaviour
2 comments on potential noise levels
2 comments on the current proposed location

3 comments covered respondents main reasons for stating 'don't know' on supporting the proposed pump track:

1 comment concerned about the proposed location in the recreation ground
1 comment about the need for more litter bins near the pump track
1 comment concerned about potential anti social behaviour

7 Selection of comments made on the surveys:

In favour of the proposed new pathway:

Excellent and intelligent idea;

Hope it happens as looks lovely. Good initiative. Lovely for kids and go for a walk;

Would provide a convenient place to cycle and have fun;

Physical activity facilities like these are very beneficial for people of all ages;

It will be good to use the track + path. I look forward to the pump track;

Amazing idea, more cycling needed;

Definitely in favour;

Have a disabled daughter so cannot walk on grass so perfect idea;

The pathway is a wonderful idea for people like myself with mobility issues. (Electric wheelchair);

Courtesy and consideration should be given to all users. (Deaf user);

Would be lovely as knee problem, difficulty walking on grass;

Mayfield Children's home use it and are disabled. Please do it. Path needed in winter;

Good for the grandchildren. Great idea, use path all year;

We need to be able to walk around the rec all year. Great idea;

My children will benefit from this a great deal;

Many times I've thought it needs a path, brilliant to get one;

Safe perimeter to walk baby in buggy;

I'm sure it will get used, especially by parents with young children, giving them somewhere safe to learn and practice biking, scooting, rollerblading etc.;

Pathway is good as wet and muddy;

Another great asset for the community to meet and share whilst being more active physically;

A pathway beneficial in bad weather conditions;

An excellent health and wellbeing project for all ages, especially the children need it;

To walk, cycle, in a safe area while grandchildren scoot or cycle in a family Sunday afternoon;

Good facility for Horam residents to use all year round- Better use of space and Council have the money;

What about 'Clear Hedge Wood'. If Manor Farm sale goes to lots - HPC have CIL funds!

This is a great idea. We need a safe place. Please let it happen;

Good to have somewhere to walk in any weather away from traffic;

Lovely park and field but I think these changes will only improve it;
Will use path during winter;
Given current situation, facilities like this should be implemented for people who are socially isolated;
Great opportunity, allow more people to use recreation ground. Open up area to disabled users;
Improve mental health for children;
All year use good idea. It's a great idea;
Give people things to do;
Great idea for all ages, many uses;
I think it will be good for all ages;
Supportive of all efforts to increase health, wellbeing and fitness of our local community and feel this would be of benefit, fully support the proposals;
Benefits health and the environment as we will be able to get there without driving;

Great idea, What a super idea, Good idea, Great idea, Nice idea, Fantastic idea, Sounds great, Great Idea, Great idea, Great idea (mixed responses)

Reduction of obesity, improved enjoyment of area. Improved mental and physical health;
As a family we would cycle along the new path;
Benefits to exercising home educated children;
I have been thinking for years that we need a running track in Horam I run 1-2x a week and it will be great to have an all weather circuit;
Healthy activities for children in the area and would encourage a healthier lifestyle;
Brilliant idea for use by local community – All ages!;
I think a dry path around the Rec will be very useful for people to enjoy the open space, especially when winter and the field is too wet;
It's an excellent idea. You would be able to use it all year round;
It's an excellent location;
Get to use the lower field as well;

Not in favour of the proposed new pathway:

Because of cyclists using it as well;
Might encourage cyclists that can be hazardous to walkers;
Yes, I will be knocked over by cyclists, scooters, roller blades;

In favour of the proposed new Pump Track

The pump track is a great idea as it can be used by so many age groups for various skills and building confidence. Once built it is easy to maintain at very little cost and due to it's nature it's not likely to attract groups seeking somewhere to commit ASB. It brings various age groups of the community together to carry out beneficial physical exercise;

We currently travel to Eastbourne for this. It would be great to have it here;
Amazing idea. Works well in other areas. Will be more eco friendly to be able to walk to pump track + not drive elsewhere;

Gives teenagers something to do;

Very much in favour;

For fun;

Really excited about the Pump track;

The main thing will be our ten year old definitely using the Pump Track;

Low level pump track please;

It's a good place for the kids to go;

Needed. Get it done;

Pump track awesome for kids;

Really keen on pumptrack;

Pump track looks nice and big;

Enables extra healthy exercise for children etc.;

More facilities, grandchildren would use pumptrack as well as skatepark;

The pump track looks great fun I'd love to have a go;

A good idea;

It would be amazing, awesome;

Something extra for lads;

I have three boys and this would be amazing for them. 100% for this;

Pump track great for kids;

Yes, Yes, Yes;

Keeps children occupied;

Better for younger users, good to meet people.

Our son would use the pumptrack;

Young children, already use the park and enjoy it;

Another local attraction to take my children to;

Think this would be amazing for kids and adults;

Improve mental health for children and families;

Yes, please. Great for young children to practice on bikes, keep fit, mental health positive;

My son would love the pumptrack- he currently uses the one in Newhaven, which is great;

It would be lovely to have one so close to home;

This is a great idea – Fully in favour. We need a safe place for small kids to ride bikes and scoots;

The pump track is an excellent idea. The skate park is really successful and could easily be expanded. It is great to have facilities for children and teenagers (who are often overlooked);

It will encourage biking and help learning;

There was a skate park but no bike facilities so I need some BMX places;

Wonderful, Sounds great, Good idea, Beautiful, Good idea, More for kids. Fantastic, Great for community! Happiness; (mixed responses)

Not in favour of the proposed new pump track:

Misuse and Anti social behaviour;

If in proposed position. I like the idea of a pump track but not sited right next door to the lovely quiet campsite. Needs to be next to the skate park;

Youth already have a skate park. It will deter use by older residents who just want to have and enjoy a quiet, tranquil area;

Living opposite the village hall we already get disturbed by late night skaters around the car park so I am worried it would bring more noise and anti social behaviour. Although it has been better recently it is a worry of mine that it could get bad again;

Wrong location, too high a carbon footprint. A more natural and environmentally friendly option preferred please;

Only concern is would pumptrack attract anti-social behaviour;

This is a beautiful peaceful green space. May it always be so;

Pumptrack good for kids but concern over anti-social behaviour;

More litter bins;

'Don't Know' if in favour of the pump track:

Not that location. Not necessary, kids have enough;

We would need a lot more litter bins- especially near pump track;

I like the idea of the pump track but we have enough anti social behaviour up at the skate park so I'm concerned about additional volume of groups gathering and abusing area;

Comments on perceived barriers to using the new facilities?

How will cars cross it?
Will there be fast bikes?
Crossing the main road;
Only if it is too busy;
May get too crowded;
Concerned about football encroaching;
If it attracts too many people (especially cyclists), bikes and buggies, I'll go elsewhere;
May be difficult when football is on. May get too crowded;
As long as safety is a top priority i.e. high speed cycling around track;
Safe access for walkers/cyclists. Pedestrian crossings etc.;
Must have drop-down curb. Travelling on electric wheelchair;
Being deaf, faster users should warn walkers if coming from behind;
Cannot drive (mobility scooter), need to come with family;
Please make sure there are no engines of any sort on the path (except perhaps disability electric vehicles). It is a beautiful peaceful green area Lots of noise not acceptable;
Teenagers dominating the pump track;
Social distancing rules? We've stopped using Cuckoo trail due to social distancing;
For some people getting access to the area easily without using a car. There should be footpath/cycle access from the new "Four seasons "housing estate and possibly from Chiddingly Road. If there is is not a hard surface access point – ie it is too muddy to reach the track in winter;
If there is dog poo everywhere it would ruin it;
Uncontrolled dogs;
Access to the Four Seasons housing estate is really required;

General praise for Recreation Ground:

Playground is wonderful, lots of variety;
Cycled from Eastbourne on Cuckoo Trails to come to playground specifically;
Really nice, especially dog walking. Use playground with grandkids;

Further comments/suggestions for the Horam Recreation Ground:

Have treasure hunt signs around the park. Like a QR code where they can take and fill out. (I could create it!);

As members of a Horam family of five we are in full support of your project, my only request is that the 1K path turns into a 5K to allow for a park run to start here which will be a fantastic opportunity for mental health, fitness and community;

Can the track be used for 5km park run which would be fabulous;

A smaller portion of the pump track for younger riders would be good. Two areas means less congestion on the skate park;

What you are proposing is overkill – It needs to be lower key and made primarily out of natural material. Thus lowering carbon footprint;

Would CCTV be required to prevent anti social behaviour, and mass group gatherings preventing people using it;

I think that making the current 'playing field' part into a park with flower beds with benches to sit and admire the wildlife etc. and winding paths would be more beneficial and offer more enjoyment than simply a path around the outside of a patch of grass. Path around rec. is probably okay as sport is played there. I see no benefit to having a playing field when there's a rec ground there to and the field could be put to better use. I see the map shows a 'nature area', 'butterfly meadow' and a 'halfway hut'..... news to me. I don't think I've seen any such things or have done and not noted them, as they are not maintained as such perhaps? I think a path would be lovely. May I suggest you supply more litter bins and for dog waste too and get the later emptied as it is overflowing;

I think the path is a good idea. Will it be too wide and what will it be made of?

Create a new woodland in the (rear) playing field;

I think it is important to improve wildlife habitats as part of this project. Interesting benches/art work;

More need for tree plantings and stewardship of the land. But would use with kids; Nesting boxes;

Adds another focal point to Horam. Fantastic idea. A pop up coffee shop/shack/van to sell refreshments;

Having been a Parish councillor in Heathfield I think funding will be difficult to get but I think fantastic idea;

This would be a brilliant opportunity and location to install calisthenics equipment

This is essentially bars to do pull ups and dips and similar bodyweight exercises.

This is becoming incredibly popular. The health benefits are amazing and recreational exercise has been proven to help young men with good mental health;

How about creating a new woodland in the playing field. Much more environmentally friendly. Do you know how to create butterfly meadow. See wildflowerslawnsandmeadows.com

What do 'nature areas' mean? (on flyer diagram)

Some people might start up a Horam 'Park Run';

Would be excellent if trees planted around the edge. An avenue of trees - like what is common in France;

Can the pond beyond the tennis club be tidied up and a walk made around that?

Would be amazing to have wild swimming area for the hot summers;

This would be an excellent place for riding bikes - particularly for children;

If there are litter bins, they would need to be emptied so that they do not overflow;

30.9.20